The Interagency Process In Regional Foreign Policy

A Monograph
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This monograph examines interagency (IA) coordination in executing US foreign policy. The analysis demonstrates that the current IA apparatus is flawed. The system is plagued by lack of oversight and authority to compel compliance. Examining the reconstruction of post-JUST CAUSE Panama, the author highlights numerous factors that disrupt effective IA coordination. These are: lack of genuine authority for DOS regional bureau chiefs and ambassadors; lack of a regional outlook; poor IA discipline and trust; institutional infighting; subordination of foreign policy to domestic politics; and a chaotic Congressional funding apparatus.

The author recommends six solutions to the problem. These are: (1) Give the DOS regional assistant secretaries and ambassadors genuine authority and responsibility for executing regional policy; (2) Create an IA education program for mid-level officials of all agencies; (3) Move the IA working groups away from Washington, closer to or inside their regions; (4) Focus on regional rather than bilateral solutions; (5) Rationalize the funding process; and, (6) Ensure a lead agency is identified and empowered for each foreign policy initiative.

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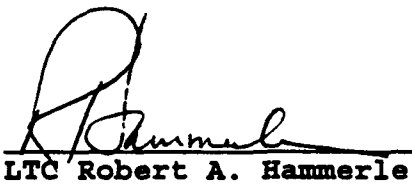

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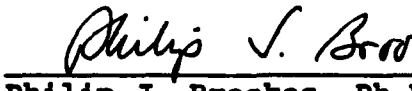

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ABSTRACT

THE INTERAGENCY PROCESS IN REGIONAL FOREIGN POLICY. by MAJ Mark L. Curry, USA, 53 pages.

This monograph examines interagency (IA) coordination in executing US foreign policy. The analysis demonstrates that the current IA apparatus is flawed. The system is plagued by lack of oversight and authority to compel compliance. Examining IA efforts in the reconstruction of post-JUST CAUSE Panama, the author highlights numerous factors that disrupt effective IA coordination. These are: lack of genuine authority for DOS regional bureau chiefs and ambassadors; lack of a genuine regional outlook; poor IA discipline and mutual lack of trust; institutional infighting; subordination of foreign policy to domestic politics, and a chaotic Congressional funding apparatus.

The author recommends six solutions to the problem: (1) Give the DOS regional assistant secretaries and ambassadors genuine authority and responsibility for executing regional policy; (2) Create a common IA education program for mid-level officials of all agencies; (3) Move the IA working groups away from Washington, closer to or inside their regions; (4) Focus on regional rather than bilateral solutions; (5) rationalize the funding process; and (6) ensure a lead agency is identified for each foreign policy initiative.

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I. Introduction

This monograph examines how the United States integrates national power in executing regional policy; and proposes how these elements might be better coordinated. The fundamental premise is that the United States executive branch of government, below the National Security Council and the headquarters of the Cabinet level departments and agencies, is not organized to effectively coordinate national regional policy. The primary failure lies in the imperfect unity of effort between the various agencies responsible for executing foreign policy. The process these agencies use to coordinate their efforts is referred to as the interagency (IA) process. Much has been written about the national level policy making organs within Washington D.C.. The organizations implementing the policies, and their coordinating procedures, are addressed much less frequently, except to note that "the US is programmatically and structurally ill-equipped for..." this task.[1] Few of the analysts who have examined this issue have offered specific solutions to correct these problems.

The paper initially discusses the National Security Strategy to establish the objectives which the interagency coordination effort should fulfill. The assumptions upon which the study is based are explained. Formal relationships between the agencies, how they execute regional policy, and some widely recognized problems with the system are explained in Section II. Section III examines how the regional policy for Latin America was implemented with regard to Panama in the context of OPERATION JUST CAUSE. This analysis highlights the lack of unity of effort among the agencies and its implications. The author recommends solutions for reducing the friction between the agencies in Section IV.

Assumptions.

The following assumptions are used throughout the monograph. Obviously, not all are true, but they are necessary to keep the paper focused on the regional interagency integration, and to limit its scope.

1. The National Security Council apparatus works effectively, and the policies of the President and the principal NSC members are fundamentally correct. While this may not be the case, it will limit discussion to the regional interagency apparatus and environment, and preclude addressing problems external to that arena.

2. All primary players in the policy decision process, including Congress, have the best interests of the United States and the successful conclusion of NSC policies as their uppermost concern. While institutional cultural differences exist, a fundamental willingness to cooperate for the good of the strategy is a necessary precondition for improving performance.

3. The publicly announced regional policies of the United States correctly reflect the decisions of the NSC. This paper does not account for ulterior motives or hidden agendas.

4. The nation's political institutions possess the political will to make fundamental changes in how we implement foreign policy. This effort may rival that of the Goldwater-Nichols Act in scope.

Two significant limitations have been imposed on the study to keep it focused and within a manageable scope. The first is the exclusion of non-US agencies such as the UN, NATO, the Organization of American States, G-7, Non-Governmental Organizations and Private Volunteer Organizations. Though cooperation with these activities will be a dominant feature of future US foreign policy, they lie outside the scope of the monograph. The second is

that the study is unclassified, which precludes use of protected or privileged material, so that all resources must be in the public domain. The National Security Strategy of the United States.[2]

The principal elements of the national security strategy, as they relate to regional and international affairs, are synopsized below. It is upon this vision that national policies are theoretically built, and that the interagency apparatus conducts its daily business.

Foremost among all goals is the responsibility to ensure US security as a free and independent nation, including protecting its fundamental values, institutions, and people. Four national objectives are derived from this primary interest.

First, the United States seeks to promote global and regional stability to encourage peaceful change and progress. This is achieved by protecting US citizens; supporting international agreements; preventing hostile elements from dominating vital US interests; and supporting the expansion of democracy. The multipolar nature of the post cold war world places a premium on regional security, yet allows us to be more discriminant about what constitutes a national interest. Four elements define the defense strategy: strategic deterrence and defense; forward presence; crisis response (power projection); and reconstitution. Principle programs are aimed at: nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction; arms control; ballistic missile defense; intelligence; terrorism; and illegal drugs.

Second, the US encourages open and democratic systems that promote human rights, economic freedom, stability, and respect for international norms of conduct, including environmental concerns.

Third, the US strives to create an open international economic marketplace that contributes to US economic prosperity, as well as others. This is accomplished in conjunction with the Group of Seven (G-7) to create sustained global economic growth; and by freeing trade via the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and similar agreements. The national strategic policy calls for shifting international economic assistance away from grants, and emphasizes assisting developing nations to improve their economic infrastructure and free market system. In short, our aim is to reduce developing nations' dependence on US aid, not to prolong it.

Fourth, the US seeks to lead the world's collective response to crisis management and resolution. Foremost among these crises is the partnership to support stability and economic and political reform in the former Warsaw Pact and elsewhere. Finally, we champion refugee and immigration programs. Two main avenues are open to address these crises, the United Nations (UN), and regional organizations like the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Regional solutions, rather than US solutions, are expected to yield the best results.

The reductionist approach used above to explain the national security policy inevitably compartments the information into finite categories. The document itself is careful to integrate all elements of national power in each of the discussions of national interests and objectives. The NSS leaves no doubt that the policy is intended to be thoroughly integrated at all levels and across the spectrum of foreign relations. This conclusion is reinforced by the admonition to improve interagency coordination in fulfilling the strategy.

"Coordination within the government can be improved... We need to re-examine the entire government apparatus - agency structure, personnel and practices - to ensure the most efficient policy making under the new conditions. We should restructure the various agencies of the U.S. government...to ensure a coherent coordinated approach."[3]

Having established the National Security Strategic framework, the paper examines the structure for interagency execution and concerns about its effectiveness.

II. The Intraregional Interagency Structure, Process and Problems.

The Interagency Architecture and Process[4]

This section analyzes each of the primary executors of US foreign policy. It identifies their subcomponents, and describes their formal relationships. It also discusses the interagency process by which they actually coordinate to fulfill the guidance of the NSC. Only the principal agencies are discussed, as the myriad small and infrequently involved organizations would overwhelm the study.

Six agencies execute the core of the nation's foreign relations policies. These are: the National Security Council; Department of State, including the United States Information Agency[5] and the United States Agency for International Development; Central Intelligence Agency; the Department of Commerce; and the Department of Defense. The relative importance of each agency's contribution varies with the situation in the region or country being assisted, but all are present in some capacity. The

interagency coordination structure is shown in Appendix A.

The National Security Council. The NSC is responsible for formulating policy for the President's approval. As such, it falls outside the purview of this study, except as a forum to review the progress of ongoing foreign policy initiatives, which impact on subsequent interagency activity. Many of the staff personnel that serve on NSC working committees also serve as the coordinating agents for their respective agencies, and are personally involved in the IA process described below.

The Department of State. DOS is the primary coordinating body for executing foreign policy. It organizes its operations into six regional bureaus that subdivide the world geographically. These regions are: Europe and Canada, Africa, Inter-America, East Asia and the Pacific, the Near East, and South Asia.[6] Each regional bureau is headed by an Assistant Secretary of State that directs, coordinates and supervises all interagency matters within the assigned region. This is accomplished through interagency working groups (IAWG) within each regional bureau, chaired by the DOS regional bureau assistant secretaries. IAWGs are the interagency coordination mechanism for providing advice to and executing the policies of the NSC. They are charged with "directing, coordinating and supervising interagency and interdepartmental activities within their region."[7] All agencies and activities engaged in operations within a region are represented on the IAWG. The decisions and agreements stemming from the IAWGs are transmitted from the agency's board representative to the actual in-country executors via parent agency channels. Each country is assigned a DOS Country Director within the regional bureau to set policy guidelines, coordinate outside the bureau, and administer and implement the programs

for his assigned country. This is the conduit through which the regional Assistant Secretary of State communicates to the embassies.

Two other DOS bureaus deal with functional issues on a global scale. The Under Secretary of State for Security Assistance, Science and Technology coordinates programs of all departments involved in security assistance. These include the NSC, DOD, DOS, USAID, CIA, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and Department of the Treasury. Their goal is to integrate the various agencies programs for maximum efficiency. The Bureau of Politico-Military Affairs is the second functional office, which advises the Secretary of State on policy and issues.

The Department of State exercises control over two key players in the regional foreign policy arena. The first is the United States Information Agency, which supports the achievement of our foreign policy by influencing foreign nationals. The USIA reports administratively directly to the President, but receives its policy guidance through the Secretary of State.[8] USIA conducts active operations, such as Voice of America, to persuade and inform foreign audiences. It is also instrumental in advising the President and other US agencies on the effects of US policies on other regions or countries.[9]

The second subordinate agency is the United States Agency for International Development. USAID provides non-military foreign development, humanitarian aid, civil assistance, food and agriculture assistance, and conducts disaster relief and nationbuilding operations.[10]

The Central Intelligence Agency. The CIA operates training, intelligence gathering and assessment operations within designated countries in support of national policy. It is responsible for providing

the in-country and Washington-based agencies with timely intelligence assessments about conditions and potential threats and opportunities for US interests.[11] In addition to its participation in the IAWGs, the CIA also maintains a presence in the State Department's country missions.

The Department of Commerce. The Commerce Department promotes the nation's international trade, increases America's competitiveness in the world economy, and improves understanding of the Earth's physical environment.[12] It is responsible for technology transfers, financial arrangements, and trade. It operates through trade commissions, bilateral negotiations, and within the diplomatic missions of the DOS. Its importance has grown rapidly in the last twenty years due to the increased impact of the Pacific, European, and Latin American trading markets on the health of the US economy.

The Department of Defense. DOD operates in the foreign policy arena via two channels, one a chain of command, the other a technical and administrative assistance conduit. The command channel runs from the NCA to the regional Commanders in Chief (CINCs).[13] The Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) J5 division reviews and deconflicts all regional DOD programs and plans to ensure their compatibility with national policy. The J5 staff coordinates with the other agencies and represents DOD and the CINCs at the IAWGs. The JCS operate as a conduit from the regional CINCs to the NCA. The CINCs develop and synchronize military programs and contingency plans within their regions to achieve national and regional objectives. They provide input directly to the Congress and, through the JCS, the President.[14] The CINC is represented at all diplomatic missions within his theater.

Administrative DOD assistance is provided by representation on DOS

regional boards and within each embassy. This assistance is designed to maintain open communications between DOD and the other agencies, represent the DOD position, provide the ambassador and the boards with military expertise, and to coordinate operations and policy input.

Below the IAWG level, regional policy is implemented via two primary avenues; first through the country team under the direction of the US ambassador, and second via the regional CINCs. Both channels have several conduits of information and coordination between them, but each is responsible to different departments within the Executive Branch.

The US diplomatic mission or embassy in each country is the primary coordinator of all non-combat operations between the host nation and the US. They develop, administer funding, and implement foreign policy and security assistance programs, and ensure all in-country relations support US national and regional policy. The diplomatic chief, usually an ambassador, is the personal representative of the President. In practice, ambassadors receive policy guidance and and communicate with the administration through the Secretary of State.[15] Assistant Secretaries of the Regional Bureaus are technically chartered to issue directions to the ambassadors. The rigor of this hierarchial relationship is jeopardized by the fact that many ambassadors outrank the assistant secretaries, or have a close relationship with the President, Secretary of State or his Deputy.

Each ambassador is supported by a country team comprised of: military personnel assigned to the embassy (Defense Attache and Security Assistance Officer), CIA, USAID, embassy staff, USIA, and other agencies represented as appropriate. The country team manages and coordinates developmental and security assistance loans, grants, and assistance. The military component

of the country team is the primary link between the embassy/DOS channel and the CINC/DOD channel. The in-country military component is under the direction of the ambassador. If specifically directed, the regional CINC may control some in-country military forces. A Combined Coordination Center may be established to synchronize the activities of the CINC's operations with those of the diplomatic mission in such situations.[16]

The regional CINCs conduct operations within countries only as directed by the NCA. These operations should be coordinated with the ambassador or country team, and tend to be in situations of other than peaceful competition, i.e. conflict or war.

The regional CINCs maintain contact with the embassies through direct contact with the: Ambassador; Defense Attache; Security Assistance Office Chief; and the CINC's Political Advisor (POLAD). The POLAD is a State Department Foreign Service Officer assigned to the CINC's staff to provide a DOS perspective and point of contact to the regional CINC and his staff. The POLAD is also a conduit back to the DOS Regional Bureau.

In conclusion, there are two essential pieces to the policy execution coordination effort. The first is the regional bureaus' interagency boards and Country Director. The second is the country team. The regional boards are chartered to ensure the administration's policies are understood by all parties so that their instructions to their personnel on the country team or CINC's staff supports US regional policy. The country teams coordinate the details of implementation to fulfill the guidance. Both bodies are charged with creating unity of effort and maximizing the effectiveness of foreign policy programs to fulfill US interests in the region and country.

Having articulated the foreign relations structure, the monograph

examines some of the shortcomings of the system.

Problems with the Interagency Process

The process and architecture described above would seem to provide a unified body of decision makers and executive agents that have a coordinating mechanism at both ends of the spectrum. This arrangement should minimize internal bureaucratic competition, organizational inefficiency, and misunderstanding. The net result should be a cohesive team that produces and implements clear policy guidance. Yet there is widespread agreement that there is a serious lack of unity of effort in policy implementation.[17] Three recent ambassadors to El Salvador, for example, identified coordinating operations to policy as the most serious problem of their tenures.[18] Even as small an operation as the humanitarian assistance and evacuation of Haitian refugees has been fraught with interagency bickering to the point that the operation was put on hold until the Secretaries of State, Defense, and Justice could personally resolve who would pay for and staff the operation.[19] This section examines the institutional factors that inhibit smooth coordination.

The first obstacle to effective interagency coordination is the lack of directive authority at levels below the NSC. "National intentions are redefined by institutions, factions, and individuals divided over goals, methods, interpretations of facts, and personal ambition."[20] While the members of the respective boards and country teams are expected to coordinate through the regional bureau chief or the embassy, their charter and authority flows from their parent agency. Even within the DOS, the USIA and USAID respond to their own institutional constituency.[21] The regional bureau chief, if informed of a divergence in operations, can raise

the issue to the NSC for resolution,[22] but he lacks sufficient authority to ensure compliance. Moreover, there is a natural hesitation to deliver bad news or involve the highest echelons of national authority over issues that should be resolved at lower levels.[23] Even if such an action is taken, progress is slowed or stopped while the friction is overcome.[24] The agencies are aware of this institutional bias, and consciously or otherwise, exploit it to their advantage.

The second contributory factor is the country-to-country orientation of foreign policy. Despite the regional orientation of the IAWGs, funding, communications between operators and the regional bureaus, and the actual execution of operations is done by individual country teams. Once an action leaves the IAWG, there is no civilian regional supervision. Only the military CINCs have directive regional oversight, and are empowered only for military actions, not the entire range of foreign policy. This vertical stovepiping of authority outside the NSC and IAWGs places a considerable burden on the country teams' coordination process.[25]

Additionally, changes in the world political structure have rendered the old strict country-to-country model of foreign policy at least partially obsolete. The Post Cold War environment no longer requires that every conflict or problem be approached in the context of global confrontation. The demise of the Soviet Union has resulted in a considerable increase in regional instability. Previous beneficiaries of Western or Warsaw Pact largesse are now ignored as they no longer contribute to either side's dominance. Several marginally viable client countries are even unravelling as nation states. Poverty and hunger are increasingly regional issues. Health problems, especially the spread of

AIDS and malaria are also more regional epidemics than country-specific phenomena. There is an increasing number of destabilized regimes and countries with violent insurgencies that spill across international borders. Narco-terrorism is almost always regional, rarely national. At any rate, narco-terrorists can move between countries far faster than the US can initiate new bilateral agreements with newly infected individual countries.[26] 'Tribalism' and nationalism in the southern hemisphere, Balkans, and the former Soviet Republics ignore previously accepted but artificial political boundaries.[27] Potentially violent religious fundamentalism threatens not just discrete countries, but the entire southern rim of Asia and the northern half of Africa. Ecological abuses like deforestation, desertification, and pollution are having global and regional impacts. Attempts to deal with individual nations on ecological issues is too often seen as 'neo-colonialism'.[28] Regionally based attempts to curb ecological abuse seem to be less violently opposed.

The world markets are also much more regionally organized than before. The European Union, attempts to restore the former Soviet economic union, and the Pacific Rim consortiums all speak of trade, finance, and commerce being conducted by multinational corporations, through regional markets, in accord with regional trade organizations. It is simply no longer possible to focus primarily on country-to-country trade issues. In sum, the world's political, social, and economic organization is becoming increasingly regional, moving away from the globalism and strict government-to-government orientation of the Cold War. In order to satisfy American needs for security, stability, and open access to robust foreign markets, the US must adopt a more regional approach.

The third problem is that DOS regional bureaus are frequently ill-informed of internal agency operations within the region.[29] As an example, DOD and the CIA have been particularly leery of informing the other agencies of their operations for fear of compromising security. For their part, many agencies, and even some ambassadors, are particularly reluctant to cooperate with military or CIA personnel out of anti-military cultural bias or concern of being identified as agents of the US military by the host nation.[30] Civilian agencies are neither asked to, nor do they request to review DOD Operations or Concept Plans. It is hard to imagine a coherent regional or foreign policy in which the DOS and DOD have not jointly reviewed the potential responses to foreign crises.[31] Part of this problem is due to the lack of understanding of each other's culture. The civilian agencies lack an appreciation of risk and operational considerations that are so crucial to the DOD and CIA mindset. Conversely, DOD's focus on quick, decisive victories reveals a gap in its appreciation for the long term commitment that foreign policy requires. This condition will be examined in detail in the Panamanian case study in Section III.

Additionally, each agency has its own internal culture and agendas that frequently do not mesh well with other civilian agencies.[32] The problem is occasionally one of institutions protecting or seeking to expand their niches of "self-proclaimed expertise and discretion... to protect their prerogatives from others within and outside of their specialty."[33] But most problems are usually not the result of deliberate internecine warfare or turf battles.[34] Differences in perspective and variances in agencys' charters account for most conflicts of interest.[35] Organizations tend to maximize their own programs' importance and are naturally hesitant

to subordinate them to another agency's agenda, even at the expense of the greater good.[36] A certain degree of bureaucratic tension and competition is perhaps constructive. But without a powerful regional bureau chief, it too often leads to situations which resemble a football team where every player is taking signals from a different coach.[37]

Fourth, bureaucratic inertia also keeps the IA process from functioning smoothly. Systems and procedures, often supported by Congressionally-mandated legal requirements and constraints, often create gaps and overlaps of responsibility and authority. It is difficult to amend these conditions without a compelling reason or alarming change in the situation.[38] Business-as-usual remains the easiest way to conduct operations, despite valid reasons to change.[39]

Fifth, the foreign policy process in Washington is frequently held hostage to domestic politics. The reelection process becomes dominant early in every administration's tenure.[40] In order to show progress to the domestic voters, political advisors to the President and Congress push for short term results to long term problems.[41] This superheated political environment infects civil servants with the need to show action and demonstrate results, even if immediate action may be counterproductive to long term solutions to the foreign policy dilemma.[42] Proximity to the power base becomes a necessary lever to ensure one's own policies are resourced and supported.[43] This leads to agencies evading the charter of the IAWGs by approaching the NSC directly, subverting the coordination process in order to 'sell' their own policies, both to the policy formulation body and to the executive agents below the NSC.[44] This process even extends to media leaks to further one's agenda.[45]

A sixth factor is the lack of strategic ends, ways and means planning process within the IAWGs.[46] The method of operation is more intuitive, collegial, consensus oriented, and abstract; and based less on a systematic, analytical approach to foreign policy 'campaign' planning. While this is harmless in the academic environment, it is counterproductive in the pragmatic world of policy implementation.[47] In short, there is no civilian model that approximates the strategic-operational-tactical spectrum so familiar to the military.[48]

Finally, funding for foreign policy programs is split over multiple Congressional committees with authorization and oversight responsibilities and prerogatives. Depending upon which agency is executing a portion of the program, different Congressional committees and sub-committees control the funding. This leads to situations where agencies must fund emergency operations out of funds earmarked for other operating budgets. Also, supporting operations may be lavishly funded by one sub-committee, while the primary program may be unfunded or underfunded by another. This creates delays, confusion and an imbalance in ways and means within the program.

The forces mentioned above all serve to stymie effective interagency coordination in Washington. Similar forces impact on the country team. Geographic distance between foreign embassies and Washington as well as intervening layers of bureaucracy between the IAWG and the country team tend to dilute the effects of coordination. In-country effectiveness depends on the cooperation of agencies too often in competition.[49] The representatives on the country teams work through the embassy, but also receive their instructions from their parent agency. In the interim, much coordination can be undone. The embassy, assuming that programs have been

previously coordinated, must either accept the results, resolve the issue at country level, or challenge them through the system, slowing progress.

Presidential directives specify that ambassadors have 'full sway' over the entire range of non-military US activities in-country[50]. Some mission chiefs are therefore more comfortable dealing directly with the Secretary of State, his Deputy, or even the President than with DOS career professionals at the regional bureau. This practice bypasses the regional assistant secretaries, the Country Directors, and the IAWGs, creating more friction within the system.

Not all ambassadors, DOS career professionals, and other Country Team members are country, regional, or even subject matter experts. They are, too frequently, generalists who prefer accommodation rather than forcing the system to produce a coordinated policy.[51] This contributes to a management by consensus approach in which any positive action can be seen as progress. This can result in a desire for moving a program to completion even if it works at cross purposes to the overall guidance or other elements of the strategy. Routine personnel turbulence among inexperienced country team members creates problems in keeping the process coordinated.[52]

Finally, issues of special importance to an administration may result in special negotiating teams bypassing the Embassy and IAWGs altogether.[53] This is particularly prevalent in matters that impact directly on national security such as nuclear arms control. Not only does this practice eliminate the country team's usefulness in coordinating policy into action, it threatens to make operations work at cross purposes to one another.

In conclusion, the foreign relations implementation structure appears on paper to have two solid coordinating mechanisms to ensure integration of

all agencies and programs. These are the DOS chaired regional interagency boards, and the embassy country teams. In fact, a lack of genuine regional control over operations, institutional bias, bureaucratic inertia, legal limitations, domestic politics, a complex Congressional funding mechanism, and most importantly, lack of directive authority at the sub-NSC level subvert the coordination efforts. Quoting Charles Bohlen, a distinguished career diplomat, "No doubt about it, the American system of separation of powers was not designed for the conduct of foreign affairs."[54]

The monograph has examined the foreign policy apparatus, and questions about its effectiveness. It now compares the IA process against its performance in Panama to see if the charges against it are justified.

III. Interagency Operations in Panama

The 20 December, 1989 invasion of Panama, and the events surrounding it, are used to illustrate the effectiveness of interagency cooperation. The litmus test for success is how well execution fulfilled the stated national objectives and policies.

Just Cause provided the interagency process one of the most promising opportunities for harmony and unity of effort in the history of US foreign policy. The United States had been intimately involved in Panama since the nineteenth century. Panama was home to the only significant body of US troops in the southern hemisphere, hosted USSOUTHCOM headquarters, had until recently been home to the US-dominated School of the Americas, and had been a focal point for CIA, Department of State, DEA, and DOD regional operations.[55] Additionally, the Reagan Administration had relied on the relative stability and cooperative attitude of the Panamanian government to

support its operations in Nicaragua, Honduras, and El Salvador; all critical Latin American conflicts of the pre-Just Cause years.[56] There was little about the country and people that was unknown to at least one agency within the executive branch foreign policy apparatus.

Throughout the early and mid 1980s, the Torrijos and Noriega regimes had supported US regional policy objectives. Between 1986 and 1989, the abuses of the Noriega regime gradually led the United States to regard his departure as a necessary precondition to establish democracy in Panama, and to continue maintaining stability throughout the region. Additionally, the Panamanian Defense Force (PDF) would have to be disbanded. These armed thugs were Noriega's power base, and operated through extortion, corruption, repression, and state sponsored narco-terrorism.[57] The political 'bill of attainder' against Noriega included: abuse of human rights and due legal process; decreasing reliability as a bulwark against regional communism; flagrant drug trafficking; threats to the safety of American property and citizens; and questionable reliability toward upholding the provisions of the Panama Canal treaty. Our increasingly warm relations with, and the apparent demise of, the Soviet Union made Noriega's regional security assistance even less critical to our national strategy of containment. By 1988, the Reagan-Bush administrations regarded his ouster as the only practical solution.

The Panama operation is examined in two phases: preinvasion and postinvasion. The preinvasion analysis focuses on the interagency coordination for: the actual ouster of Noriega; the actions to restore Panama to a viable economic entity; and the actions to introduce legitimate democracy. The postinvasion section examines the results of the preinvasion

interagency coordination, and the attempts to rectify shortcomings of the preinvasion preparations.

Preinvasion Interagency Coordination

The drive to remove Noriega from power began as early as 1986 when Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Elliott Abrams, the regional chief for Latin America, determined that the Panamanian strongman was no longer an asset to US interests in the region.[58] In June of 1987, Roberto Diaz Herrera, a fellow Noriega henchman, turned on his boss and began a campaign to stop the human rights abuses and begin the democratic process. The US Embassy in Panama, USSOUTHCOM and the Panama Canal Commission could not agree on an appropriate response in support of Herrera, thus allowing Noriega to crush the incipient revolt with impunity. Noriega's repression led to the US imposition of economic sanctions on Panama. Later, Panamanian bank assets were also frozen, leading to the closure of most Panamanian banks and the gradual collapse of the legitimate Panamanian economy.

The failure of the three in-country organizations to recommend a policy to the NSC began a bitter argument between the DOS and DOD about the use of military force to oust Noriega. While the formulation of national policy lies outside the scope of this monograph, the early consideration of force by the NSC, and DOS in particular, highlights the fact that over two years were available to the IA apparatus to address how force might be used, and what the aftermath requirements might entail.

The economic pressures of the embargo prompted Noriega to sponsor riots against the US embassy in 1987, resulting in the CIA, the last Noriega supporters in the US government, abandoning him. At this time,

November 1987, General Frederick F. Woerner, Jr., CINCUSSOUTHCOM, directed his staff to begin studying options to intervene in Panama.[59] This effort preceded the actual invasion by over two years, and was formalized by a JCS planning order dated 28 February 1988. This became the second instance in which a primary agency had clear indications that a major incident with important interagency implications was likely well before the actual event.

Later that year, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence rejected a DOD, DOS, and CIA proposal to foster a PDF-led coup.[60] Again, the warning signs of an approaching crisis with interagency ramifications were available, this time with three key agencies jointly involved.

On 4 February, 1988, two separate attorneys from the US Department of Justice (DOJ) indicted Noriega on drug charges. Their actions surprised the Departments of State and Defense, who were notified only 24 hours earlier. Based on this action, Assistant Secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs Elliot Abrams encouraged Panamanian President Delvalle to fire Noriega and to institute genuine democracy in Panama. Delvalle did as Abrams suggested, but again, US support for the anti-Noriega forces was ineffective and uncoordinated, so that Delvalle was ousted by Noriega in short order. Based on heightened tensions and harassment of US personnel in Panama, DOS finally persuaded USSOUTHCOM to sever its ties with the PDF and the Panamanian government.

After the May 7, 1989 elections were nullified by Noriega's blatant theft and restuffing of ballot boxes; the United States Embassy began reducing its staff from 120 to about 45. This trend began over seven months prior to JUST CAUSE, and continued up to the time of the invasion. By the time of the invasion, only 15 Embassy personnel remained in country. On 1

September, 1989, the US broke formal diplomatic relations with Panama. Exacerbating the shortage of interagency ties in-theater, on September 30, 1989, USSOUTHCOM's Political Advisor retired and was not replaced by DOS until after the invasion, four months later. General Frederick F.Woerner, Jr., CINCUSSOUTHCOM, summed up the situation by publicly declaring that the US suffered from a policy vacuum in Washington with regard to Panama. He declared that DOS wanted to remove Noriega, but lacked both a plan to do so and a replacement structure.[61]

On 1 October, 1989, Major Moises Giroldi, a key officer in the PDF, notified USSOUTHCOM that he was going to execute a coup on the following day. His intent was to gracefully retire Noriega to a countryside hacienda without prosecution. After consulting with the NSC, CINCUSSOUTHCOM decided to provide minimum support to the Giroldi coup, unless Noriega was turned over to US authorities directly.[62] When the coup failed on 3 October, Congress was told of the exchange between the coup leaders and USSOUTHCOM, and took public umbrage at the missed opportunity to grab Noriega in the brief period that Giroldi's forces detained him. Congressional disaffection centered on the fact that the Administration's publicly announced policy was that Noriega was an illegal ruler, and that the Endara slate, winner of the May elections, was the legitimate government. Yet the Administration had failed to capitalize on its opportunity.[63] The decision to minimize US participation in the coup may have been prudent. However, the entire episode reveals once again that all elements of the US government were aware that the conditions in Panama were reaching short term culmination, and that preparations for the crisis and its aftermath were necessary.

Throughout this period and in response to the above events, the USSOUTHCOM Operations Plan (OPLAN) to depose Noriega continued to mature. It was divided into two essentially separate plans, a combat plan, OPLAN BLUE SPOON, which would result in OPERATION JUST CAUSE,[64] and the restoration plan, OPLAN BLIND LOGIC, which ultimately resulted in OPERATION PROMOTE LIBERTY.[65] The plans had undergone extensive revision and internal military analysis since their inception in 1987, but had not been staffed in any way with the other regionally involved agencies. The planners for BLIND LOGIC were initially forbidden to discuss the plan at all with the US Embassy, the agency most involved in the restoration of Panama. Eventually, they were authorized to "talk around" the plan with the Embassy's Political Counselor. While little coordination was possible in these circumstances, they did discover that DOS envisioned a post-invasion Panama secured by a police force, and foresaw no need to reconstitute the military forces. This rare communication was used to modify the restoration plan. But coordination for achieving the strategic political endstate was formulated solely in DOD channels without coordination with other agencies. Indeed, the plan assumed that the U.S. military would run the Panamanian restoration plan for the first thirty days after the invasion, then turn it over to the Embassy.[66]

The review of the two years leading to JUST CAUSE reveals that there was a clear understanding among the principal foreign policy players both in Washington and Panama that action against the Noriega regime was necessary. Subsequently, substantial assistance would be required to rebuild the security and governmental apparati of Panama. Indeed, Panama had no democratic tradition to fall back on once Noriega was deposed. The

Endara government, which the United States was backing, consisted of three individuals. The country's infrastructure, neglected by Noriega, also required massive reconstruction to create a cohesive political entity. All these conditions were known to the regional agencies, yet no coordination was made to resolve them. In fact, as the BLIND LOGIC planning demonstrates, information was deliberately withheld.

The Blind Logic plan was predicated on the following premises. First, USSOUTHCOM would run the restoration operation for the first thirty days, then pass it off to the Embassy. The military effort was to focus on: reestablishing law and order; and restoring educational, financial, health, and public safety institutions. US Army Civil Affairs units, Psychological Operations units, Military Police, Medical teams and Engineer units were to carry the initial reconstruction load. Combat units were to assist as necessary. Second, it assumed that the US government would be the defacto government for the initial period, then transition to local control, presumably the Endara government.[67]

The scope of the planned military operation was known to both the NSC and DOS. Three days before the invasion, General Powell, Chairman of the JCS, warned the NSC and Secretary of State Baker, that the US would "own the country for several weeks,...that the operation would be neither surgical, nor neat...there will be chaos. We are going to be taking down the law enforcement operation."[68] Secretary Baker agreed with the plan and did not object to the timing in order to prepare DOS to execute its role.[69]

US Ambassador to Panama Deane Hinton, who arrived in-country two weeks after the initial assault, summed up his predicament this way. "There was a major mistake made in the planning. There was no thought that I'm

aware of, any civilian inputs to the planning, any consideration of what one does afterwards."[70] But the failure to coordinate the invasion and the restoration of Panama was not solely DOD's. The Department of State had pushed for a JUST CAUSE-type action for over two years. Yet, it had done nothing to prepare for its consequences. In order to achieve US strategic objectives by deposing Noriega, it was necessary to make the Endara government a short term success by restoring basic government services, like security.[71] Without basic services, the new government would lose legitimacy, and collapse. Just as USSOUTHCOM had held its OPLANS too closely, DOS had withheld its vision of the post-Noriega political situation from the other agencies. No IA support was provided or planned for other than the military forces and staff descending on Panama. Had the DOS, as the doctrinal lead agency for coordinating all actions in Panama, established general guidelines for the postinvasion restoration for the other agencies to use in planning, the problems that were to plague PROMOTE LIBERTY might have been avoided.

The review of the events leading up to JUST CAUSE, and the preinvasion planning for PROMOTE LIBERTY leads to the following conclusions. First, the interagency apparatus had over two years in which to coordinate plans for the overthrow of the Noriega regime and the reconstruction of Panama. Despite this advantage, the only agency to make any substantive effort to create a coherent plan was the Department of Defense. Even this effort was severly flawed due to extreme concerns about operational security, which prevented effective interagency coordination. Finally, the plan itself gave inadequate thought to the reconstruction phase of the operation, vaguely relying on DOS or the Panamanian government

to assume control. However, the validity of this assumption was never verified, nor was it coordinated. The preinvasion planning and coordination for JUST CAUSE and PROMOTE LIBERTY can be summarized as being disjointed and compartmented to the point that each agency was operating in almost complete ignorance of the others, sometimes to the point of operating at cross purposes.[72] The security compartmentation of the BLIND LOGIC plan[73] and the civilian agencies failure to plan for reconstruction operations were the root causes of the post-invasion chaos. Even the military gave the post-invasion plans short shrift.[74] Ironically, DOS virtually ignored the entire problem by: failing to determine what kind of democracy was to be instated; how long it would take to achieve; and what resources were needed to make it successful.[75] The political objective was, in essence, completely ignored. These shortcomings and their effects on other agencies and the Panamanian people were revealed in the aftermath of the invasion.

OPERATION PROMOTE LIBERTY.

The first indication that the reconstruction phase of the Panamanian operation was in trouble came on the second day of the invasion, when widespread looting and rioting occurred in the larger cities.[76] The operations plans had sought to minimize US military presence in the urban areas except to eliminate PDF strongholds. Additionally, basic services: eg., health, education, finance, transportation, etc., either shut down or were incapable of dealing with the press of events.[77] Finally, and most critically for the long term success of democracy in Panama, the Endara government consisted of only three individuals: President Endara, Vice President Billy Ford, and Vice President Arias Calderon. The other 'elected' officials of Panama were unfamiliar with their roles in a

democratic government, and required assistance to learn them. The understaffed US Embassy was not capable of developing or implementing a national reconstruction plan. Thus, the burden fell on the US military, which was fundamentally ill-suited to inaugurate democracy into a country accustomed to military rule.[78]

The Civil-Military Operations (CMO) portion of OPERATION PROMOTE LIBERTY was always a stop gap measure that had received inadequate resources and attention.[79] Within five days of the assault, General James Lindsay, CINCUSSOCOM, grew concerned about the long term reconstitution of Panama and dispatched a Civil Affairs (CA) expert to devise a suitable plan. The original plan, crafted solely by the military, envisioned a broad interagency effort, and was backed by the Chief of Staff, US Army South (USARSO).[80] This plan, adopted with modifications by CINCUSSOUTHCOM, become the foundation for the only effective Panamanian restoration program.[81]

It was not until his 6 January arrival that Ambassador Deane Hinton discovered that he had virtually no staff, and that the military were in de facto control of Panama and the entire US effort. The ambassador walked into a situation in which DOS had no plan of action, no resources, and no organization to coordinate IA operations. In Ambassador Hinton's words, "I had no clue at all, arrived here with a disorganized embassy staff, no AID (U.S. Agency for International Development) at all, a few local employees...no resources and a mandate to fix things..."[82] This lack of resources meant that DOS, the lead agency of the country team was essentially moribund for the critical short- to mid-term.[83] General Maxwell Thurman, CINCUSSOUTHCOM, placed the CMO Task Force (CMOTF) under the operational control of Charge d'Affaires John Bushnell on the day of

the invasion to facilitate getting DOS and the country team operational.[84] The mission statement of the CMOTF eloquently describes the predicament the US military found itself in: "Provide what is needed to assist the newly inaugurated Panamanian government, plus whatever else is required."[85] This broad mandate was necessary to provide vital life support to the new Panamanian government, as the embassy was unable to establish a timetable for country team structure, much less for the restoration program.[86]

The conditions described above led USSOUTHCOM to establish the US Military Support Group (MSG) on 17 January, 1990, which became a de facto part of the country team. It was based upon the recommendations of General James Lindsay's post-invasion restoration study. Its charter was to conduct nation building to ensure democracy, establish internationally recognized standards of justice, and restore public services.[87] Two meetings, involving eighteen agencies, were held in January to build the foundation for the US contribution to Panamanian reconstruction. Neither meeting produced positive results as the non-DOD agencies resented being called in after the fact to solve what they saw as a self-induced 'military' mess.[88]

In the absence of a long term reconstruction strategy, USSOUTHCOM tasked the MSG in February, 1990 to create a Panama Strategy based on: satisfying the original charter of keeping the country from collapsing for the critical first year, involving all the appropriate agencies, and integrating US strategy as articulated by the ambassador.[89] This effort, begun two months after the invasion, and over two years after OPERATION JUST CAUSE was initially conceived, was the first coordinated attempt to build an effective IA plan for Panama. The plan was coordinated at least twice with all the appropriate agencies, and modified to accomodate their

input, then proposed for execution under Embassy control in early Fall, 1990.[90] The Panamanian Strategy was based on three foundations: Political Development, Security, and Economic Stability.[91] Each of these areas will be briefly examined in the context of effective interagency cooperation.

The Panamanian government expected prompt and substantial assistance in erecting democratic institutions from the ruins of the Noriega era. Although the Panama Strategy was an interagency based plan, only the military was in place to execute it. While DOS and the other agencies agreed in principle with their roles, they were busy creating their organizations, internal plans, and gathering resources at the very time the crisis was most extreme. The IA effort did not, in fact, become effective until six months after the invasion, and USAID did not fulfill its role throughout the first year after the invasion. Throughout the existence of MSG, USAID was resistant to coordinating with the military.[92]

Consequently, a number of US Army officers from the MSG shadowed the key leaders of the Endara government for the first months. They coordinated support for the myriad tasks that the Panamanian government was responsible for but had neither the expertise or resources to solve.[93] The Endara government appreciated the can-do military attitude in the face of a crisis,[94] and was reluctant to later relinquish it for the more reserved, ambassadorial approach of the emerging interagency force.[95] Despite the almost complete lack of DOS or other agency support to the Panamanian leadership at the time, military interference in civilian responsibilities led to friction between the military and the Embassy.[96] Over time, the awkward relationship between the MSG and the Endara government was broken as the country team took over. On the whole, the MSG's efforts at the

national level were effective and necessary, if entirely undoctrinal. The aggressive problem solving approach was necessary until the proper organizations could become operational.

The vital grass-roots effort to educate Panamanians about democracy would normally be the bailiwick of USAID and the Peace Corps, but neither were in place, nor were they used to 'hands-on' operations of this magnitude.[97] The military civil affairs, special forces, engineering, law enforcement, and psychological operations forces undertook this mission as an adjunct to their daily operations. The goal was to teach and demonstrate the 'proper' relationship between authority and the public in a pluralistic society.[98] Additionally, basic government services for health, education, transportation, communication, utilities, and agriculture were supported. The political importance of these operations was enormous. Without them, the Endara government would have rapidly lost its fragile legitimacy.[99]

There is perhaps no greater measure of legitimacy than a government's ability to insure the safety of its people and their property. The postinvasion security environment would obviously be critical to the long term success of democracy in Panama. However, the pre-invasion planning for this support suffered from two fatal problems. The first failure was the plan to keep US troops out of urban areas. This is credited to the military's penchant 'to destroy things, leaving to others the business of restoring them'.[100] Despite the misgivings of the planners, it was hoped or assumed that the Panamanian government would be able to restore order almost immediately. As in so many other arenas, the three man Panamanian 'government' was certainly not up to the challenge. US combat and military police forces were hastily redeployed to stop the riots and looting.

Secondly, the Department of Justice's International Criminal Investigation Training Assistance Program (ICITAP) team was not involved in the planning. ICITAP is the US agency responsible for training civil police forces in non-combat zones. Like all the other non-military agencies, they were excluded from the planning process, and did not demand to participate as the Panama crisis heated up. In fact, ICITAP's unannounced arrival on scene well after the invasion came as a relative surprise. Its attitude toward on-going operations reflected its emphasis on protecting its bureaucratic turf.[101]

Once ICITAP arrived to assert its authority, it was discovered that their program was geared solely to seminars and lectures for police forces already in existence. As with so many agencies, they were unprepared to execute even their traditional limited charter, much less the greatly expanded mission to rebuild a 12,000 man police force. Again, there was reluctance on the part of the civilian agency to cooperate with the military on the ground, forcing the military police and US Special Forces to continue their policing operations under a subterfuge in order to continue building state legitimacy.[102]

The Panamanian's greatest long term need was a stable, healthy economy. Noriega's corruption, his failure to invest in infrastructure, and the US embargo had ruined the country's ability to transact normal business. The MSG's Panama Strategy assumed the US would provide massive, long term U.S. aid under the leadership of USAID. USAID was at least doctrinally obligated to lead in nationbuilding. Based on these assumptions, and after interagency coordination, the MSG wrote an infrastructure rebuilding plan that initially relied on US military

engineering units, with a gradual transition to USAID control. As noted previously, USAID was unable to fulfill its mission for a full year after the invasion. The delay was partially caused by Congress which approved only half the funds requested.[103] Consequently, many of the planned agricultural, financial, and infrastructure reforms never occurred. The result was a Panamanian loss of faith in the Endara government and the US commitment to Panama.[104]

Ultimately, the Panama Strategy, the only real strategic plan for restoring Panama, fell apart due to interagency bureaucratic inertia, and the separate agencies followed their own individual paths.[105] Perhaps the lack of rigorous subordination of the executive agencies to the IAWG and the ambassador made this inevitable, regardless of the value of the Panama Strategy.

Conclusions of the Panamanian Case Study.

Three important generalizations can be drawn from the JUST CAUSE experience. First, the military cannot allow its emphasis on 'operational security' to exclude the rest of the interagency team from the planning process. Military action is designed to create conditions for 'a better peace', not as a unilateral event. The concern for security is understandable when American lives are at risk. But it is no more acceptable to risk US lives and treasure in missions that fail to achieve national objectives than it is to jeopardize operational security.

Secondly, the interagency process was essentially inoperative. The Panama operation was a nearly unique 'best case' for such intervention. Despite our advantages, almost no interagency interaction was evident either prior to or after the invasion. The military relinquished control

over some assets to the Embassy in an effort to accelerate the country team process, but then reverted to military lead in writing the Panama Strategy, even though it was an 'interagency plan'. The civil agencies were not conceptually prepared or organized to cooperate in a unity of effort operation to rebuild Panama.[106] The DOS, the agency that had agitated longest and most vigorously for the ouster of Noriega, had made no plans for the reconstruction of the country. Nor had it considered what political system would initially replace Noriega. No decisions were made about what kind of democracy was to be established in Panama, how long it would take to establish it, and what resources were needed in the interim. In 1992, Ambassador Hinton wondered if the country team apparatus to make those decisions and execute them was in place even at that late date.[107]

Finally, it is apparent that those charged with executing national policy did not know of each others' capabilities, responsibilities, or intentions. This ignorance lead to mistrust and an unwillingness to cooperate with one another.

The foregoing analysis demonstrates that the interagency process does not always operate as designed. Though one failure does not invalidate the entire interagency institution, the fact that the US was unable to translate its enormous advantages in Panama into an interagency success indicates that the system can be improved. That is the aim of Section IV.

IV. A Modest Proposal

"We need a strategic design...a union of effort across departments and branches of government. We have never made a systematic effort to produce such a design...Organizations and procedures for interdepartmental synchronization are urgently needed."[108]

MG Gordon R. Sullivan

The following proposals are an attempt to correct the deficiencies addressed in the Panama Case Study and the analysis of the regional Interagency Organization. The premise behind these proposals is that a new bureaucratic structure is not necessary or advisable, indeed, perhaps fewer hands will result in less confusion.

First and foremost, the regional Assistant Secretary of State must have directive authority over programs in his region.[109] His directives are made after consultation with the regional interagency working group, but are then final. If agencies operating in the region are unwilling to comply with the decision, it is incumbent upon the agency to protest to the NSC, not the assistant secretary. The NSC and NCA must be prepared to support these decisions. This will put the onus of impeding progress on the responsible party, not the currently under-empowered assistant secretary. The assistant secretary must also be held responsible for the performance of his regional team. By adding responsibility to authority, the assistant secretaries will be forced to demand performance, not to blame failure on the other agencies. Only NSC-directed combat operations led by CINCs should be allowed to operate outside this charter.

Additionally, this authority must extend over the country ambassadors. Because an ambassador's view is too limited in the new regionally-oriented world,[110] the assistant secretaries' oversight authority over ambassadors should be nearly absolute.[111] This will require that the assistant secretaries be senior to the ambassadors, and that a corresponding amount of prestige is attached to their position.[112] Ambassadors must make all approaches to DOS through the Country Director, hence to the assistant secretary, rather than bypassing them and dealing directly with the Secretary of State or the President. This will minimize internal DOS confusion, and subsequent IA or country team chaos. The ambassadors are critical components of the program, but can not be allowed to freelance outside the system. Similarly, in-country operations must be coordinated with the ambassador and the country team. There can only be unity of effort if the IAs are unified in the planning process.[113] The embassy's Political Counselor must exercise staff supervision, much as a military Chief of Staff does, over all operations within the country.[114] Security must be accommodated, but not to the exclusion of those who must live with the results. If a regional plan exceeds the jurisdiction of one embassy, or if a CINC has been designated the lead agent for an operation, the country team(s) may not be in charge, but they must be included in planning.

Secondly, the regional bureaus and the military CINC's regions should be identically aligned to minimize cross-regional coordination. The advantage is that the same teams of players work with each other routinely. This common regional organization must pervade the entire bureaucracy.

The regional bureaus must also establish on-site presence, possibly collocated with the military CINCs. Their proximity to their areas of responsibility will lend perspective to their efforts that is not available in Washington D.C..[115] Country Directors and regional Deputy Assistant Secretaries can remain in Washington to assist with policy formulation. However, the assistant secretaries, much like their military counterparts will benefit from being released from the domestic politics of the capital. Proximity to their ambassadorial charges will also strengthen their authority as well as their familiarity with the problems of the region.

Third, the education of military and civilian foreign service officials needs to be merged at least long enough to ensure a commonality of approach, and an understanding of each others' cultures. Establishment of a Peace College at the National Defense University, with required attendance by all mid-grade interagency personnel assigned to overseas duty or IAWGs is a possible solution.[116] In addition to providing education, the Peace College would serve as a think tank and source of IA doctrine to further mesh the activities of the foreign policy community.[117] The foreign relations team has to begin thinking like a team, rather than individuals operating from different playbooks. Additionally, methods useful in one metier may be transferred to another. For example, the military methodology of tying ends, ways, and means into a strategic-operational-tactical spectrum may be of some utility in policy synchronization and execution.

Fourth, the reliance on country-to-country negotiations must continue to give way to regional relations. It is simply too easy to get captured by a crisis in one country to the detriment of the regional policy.[118] Policy coordination from the theater or regional perspective will contribute to

long term solutions.[119] This process has already begun, and for the right reasons, namely the recognition that many problems are supranational. The Andean Agreement on drug interdiction is a good example.[120] Agreements of this kind, and the fundamental change in thinking about regional problems will become more imperative in the years ahead.[121] The enhanced powers of the regional assistant secretaries, and the leverage that near-to or in-region presence gives them will strengthen and hasten this process.

Fifth, funding for foreign relations operations must be rationalized. The current maze of budget authorization and oversight between the various Congressional committees and sub-committees hampers progress. Lead agencies for operations need a clear channel to a single appropriations committee that is authorized to fund projects. The establishment of a really potent regional headquarters as suggested above will help this process by presenting Congress with a unified and fully coordinated plan.

Finally, to facilitate the assistant secretary' functions and break the funding conundrum, the NSC needs to make it a practice to always identify the lead agency for operations. This charter will: strengthen the hand of the assistant secretary and the lead agency; clarify the NSC's intentions; facilitate funding; and speed US response to foreign emergencies.[122] If the NSC neglects to identify a lead agency , the regional secretary should propose, or if authorized, designate one.

No significant changes to a bureaucracy are made without costs. The agenda proposed above will create problems of its own. By moving the regional IAWGs and the regional assistant secretaries away from Washington, policy coordination between them and the NSC will become more difficult. Because the IAWGs input into policy as well as coordinate its execution,

this can be a potential increase in friction. The counterargument is that by being in closer proximity to their region, the quality of their advice will improve. The most important feature for policy formulation is accurate and timely advice. Placing the IAWG closer to the source of information, and collocating them in an interagency facility will improve both the quality and timeliness of their products. This outweighs the disadvantage of not having face-to-face contact in Washington.

Another concern is that by relocating IAWGs and the assistant secretaries away from Washington, might they not become foreign policy fiefdoms that operate independently of the NSC. A parallel structure already exists within DOD, the regional CINCs. The CINCs wield significant military power far from the halls of the NSC and DOD, yet adequate controls are placed on their operations that no one is concerned about their running amok. Similar checks can be made on the IAWGs and assistant secretaries.

Finally, the streamlined funding proposal will demand a major shift in the way Congress divides responsibility and power. Currently powerful subcommittees will be forced to share or lose power. This will be uncomfortable, and may result in fewer Congressional organs. However, the Goldwater-Nichols Act was a wrenching experience for the entrenched Congressional committees, yet it resulted in substantial improvements in the exercise of US national power.

V. Conclusion

This monograph began with the proposition that the execution of US foreign policy was inefficient and not as effective as possible because of inadequate regional interagency coordination. The national security

strategy was reviewed to delineate the objectives that the policymakers expected from their efforts. The four foundations of the security strategy are: ensuring US security as a free and independent nation; encouraging open and democratic systems; creating open international markets; and leading multinational responses to promote international stability. The growing importance of a regional orientation and a strategy that integrates all elements of national power were themes that ran through the NSS.

The second section described the foreign policy execution apparatus. The NSC is responsible for policy formulation, assisted by the various agencies. Policy execution is coordinated by the regional IAWGs, chaired by the regional Assistant Secretary of State. The results of this coordination is passed to the various ambassadors and the agencies involved. The agencies instruct their members of the country team within each embassy about their part of the program. The ambassador is responsible for leading the country team in making final coordination to assure the policy meets national and regional objectives. Military regional CINCs who also have regional responsibilities coordinate through the country team.

In practice, the system is plagued by a lack of oversight and authority to compel compliance. The regional assistant secretaries are bureaucratically and sometimes legally prohibited from enforcing policy decisions. The institutional bias and self aggrandizement of some agencies also inhibits proper coordination. The predominant country-to-country focus of our foreign policy hampers the assistant secretaries and the IAWGs regional efforts. Finally, the Congressional funding process is subdivided into a number of budgeting compartments that tend to preclude a unitary and coordinated support package being funded.

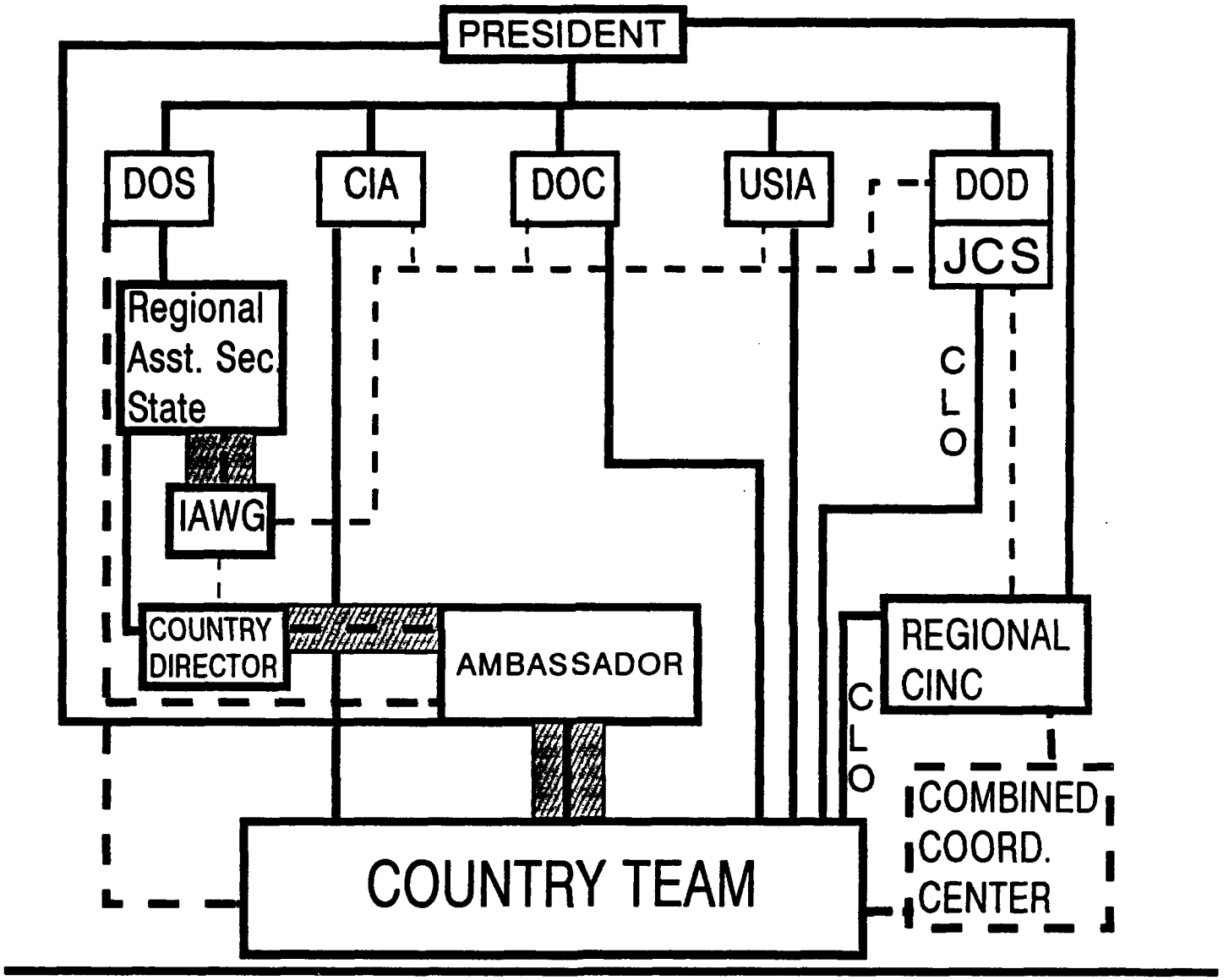
The monograph examined the 1990 invasion and restoration of Panama to see which view of the IA coordinating process was most accurate. The planning for JUST CAUSE and PROMOTE LIBERTY was completely compartmented within DOD cha . No other agency made meaningful efforts to plan for a contingency that was anticipated by the NSC for two years prior to the event. Not only were civilian agencies excluded from preinvasion planning, but serious and faulty assumptions were made about their abilities and intentions for the postinvasion restoration program. The overall strategic, political success of the operation was jeopardized by the failure to include these agencies in planning and preparation. Even the State Department, whom had initiated the anti-Noriega campaign, made no effort to prepare for the aftermath.

The postinvasion phase bore predictable fruit. The military were the only ones aware of the invasion up until the last week prior to the actual assault, consequently, DOD was the only agency with resources in-country to address what were essentially civilian agency problems. The lack of prior preparation became evident when the country team took several months to get assembled. The delays led to a military authored, but interagency coordinated Panama Strategy. Even this plan, though the only coherent one in place, was allowed to disintegrate due to interagency independent action. A number of agencies, USAID and ICITAP in particular, were resistant to cooperating with the military. The primary restoration agency, USAID, was still not in place one year after the invasion. Interagency performance in this 'best case' scenario does not inspire confidence that the interagency process as it is now configured is effective.

The author proposed six solutions to the problem of interagency coordination. The first was to empower the regional assistant secretary of

state to fulfill NSC policy decisions, and to hold him responsible. This authority would extend over interagency operations within his region as well as over the ambassadors. Protests to his decisions would go to the NSC or the Secretary of State respectively, but until overridden, the decision is his to make. Secondly, align the regional bureaus and the military CINCs AORs so that regional coordination is simplified. If regions need to be rearranged to be rational, do so. Third, educate military and civilian agency mid-level officers together, and begin building understanding of how each other operate. This bond of trust will begin to eliminate security driven suspicions. Fourth, continue the current trend toward regional negotiation, organization, and cooperation, in lieu of former country-to-country links. Fifth, streamline funding within the Congress to keep programs funded as a unitary project, not piecemealed across congressional and interagency lines. And finally, always identify a lead agency to marshall support and provide a dedicated interested party.

APPENDIX A: The Interagency Coordination Schematic



Directive Authority

Coordinating Function

Weak link. Effectiveness hampered by lack of discipline or bypassing channels.

CLO Command Less OPCON

Endnotes

1. Richard H. Shultz, Jr., In the Aftermath of War, US Support for Reconstruction and Nation-Building in Panama Following JUST CAUSE, (Maxwell Air Force Base, 1993), p.ix.

2. President of the United States, National Security Strategy of the United States (Washington, 1993). This document was promulgated in the final weeks of the Bush administration, hence it is not a direct reflection of current administration thinking. However, the new National Security Strategy, expected shortly after publication of this monograph, is not expected to substantively deviate from the 1993 edition.

3. Ibid., p. 11.

4. Descriptions of the governmental agencies in Section II are drawn from The United States Government Manual, 1993-1994, (Washington D.C., 1993). The description of the military interface within the interagency process is drawn from Appendix A, US Army Field Manual FM 100-20, Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict (Washington D.C., 1990).

5. James H. Dixon, National Security Policy Formulation, Institutions, Processes, and Issues, (New York, 1984), p. 40.

6. The United States Government Manual, 1993-1994, (Washington D.C., 1993), p.432.

7. Ibid., p. 432.

8. Dixon, National Security Policy Formulation, Institutions Processes, and Issues, p.40.

9. The United States Government Manual, 1993-1994, p. 755.

10. Ibid., p. 761.

11. Ibid., pp. 546-547.

12. Ibid., pp. 153-155.

13. Ibid., p. 179.

14. Ibid., p. 179.

15. Ibid., 438.

16. FM 100-20, Military Operations in Low Intensity Conflict, (Washington D.C., 1990), p. A-8.

17. Todd R. Greentree, The United States and the Politics of Conflict in the Developing World, (Langley Air Force Base, 1990), p. 8.

18. Ibid., p. 36.

19. Phone interview with CAPT. William T. Boone, Assistant J3, Department of Defense, 3 February, 1994. Author's notes.

13. Barry M. Rubin, Secrets of State, The State Department and the Struggle Over U.S. Foreign Policy, (New York, 1985), p. 257.

21. Dixon, National Security Policy Formulation, p. 142.

22. Ernest L. Sutton, COL, USA, The New Role of Humanitarian Assistance in National Military Strategy: How to Make It Work, (Carlisle, 1992), p. 12.

23. Rubin, Secrets of State, p. 234.

24. Greentree, The United States and the Politics of Conflict in the Developing World, p. 37.

25. Ibid., p. 37.

26. Patrice Franko-Jones, "Conflict and Cooperation in US-Latin American Security Relations", From Globalism to Regionalism: New Perspectives on US Foreign and Defense Policies, (Washington D.C., 1993), p. 92.

27. Patrick M. Cronin, "America's Role in the New World Order", From Globalism to Regionalism, New Perspectives on U.S. Foreign and Defense Policies,(Washington D.C., 1993), p. 207.

28. Franko-Jones, "Conflict and Cooperation in US-Latin American Relations", p. 101.

29. This predicament will be illustrated in Section III of the monograph in the analysis of OPERATIONs JUST CAUSE and PROMOTE LIBERTY.

30. Paul F. Gorman, GEN (Ret), USA, "National Strategy and Low Intensity Conflict", Key LIC Speeches, 1984-1989, (Langley Air Force Base, 1989), p. 78.

31. Comment made to author by COL William Zais, Assistant Chief of War Plans, J7, Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, on 13 January, 1994, in Washington D.C.. Author's notes.

32. Greentree, The United States and the Politics of Conflict in the Developing World, p. 37.

33. Dixon, National Security Policy Formulation, p. 142.

34. Greentree, The United States and the Politics of Conflict in the Developing World, p. 37.

35. Ibid., p. 37.

36. Brent Scowcroft as quoted in National Security Policy Organization in Perspective, ed. Lawrence J. Korb, (Washington, 1988), p. 9.

37. Greentree, The United States and the Politics of Conflict in the Developing World, p. 36.

38. John O. Marsh, "Thoughts on Low Intensity Conflict", Key LIC Speeches, 1984-1989, p. 102.

39. Charles S. Whitehouse, "Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict", Key LIC Speeches, 1984-1989, p. 108.

40. Dixon, National Security Policy Formulation, p. 145.

41. George F. Kennan, as quoted by Dixon, National Security Policy Formulation, p. 11. Also, Rubin, Secrets of State, pp. 124-125, and 253.

42. Dixon, National Security Policy Formulation, p. 145.

43. Ibid., p. 142.

44. Rubin, Secrets of State, p. 124.

45. Ibid., p. 132.

46. John T. Fishel, The Fog of Peace: Planning and Executing the Restoration of Panama, (Carlisle Barracks, 1992), p. 66.

47. Rubin, Secrets of State, pp. 126 and 235. Also, Dixon, National Security Policy Formulation, p. 49.

48. Fishel, The Fog of Peace, p. 66.

49. Paul F. Gorman, GEN(Ret), USA, Commitment to Freedom, Security Assistance as a U.S. Policy Instrument in the Third World, (Washington D.C., 1988), p. 27.

50. Dixon, National Security Policy Formulation, p. 33.

51. Rubin, Secrets of State, p. 243.

52. Ibid., p. 235.

53. The situation in which Ambassadors have been bypassed has become prevalent enough to demoralize Foreign Service Officers serving abroad. Some, like Thomas Hutson, have even resigned over the issue. (Rubin, Secrets of State, p. 128). Henry Kissinger even admitted that due to new communications abilities, "Ambassadors don't count anymore.", though this perhaps reflects his personal style rather than an irreversible trend. Congressional Research Service, The Ambassador in U.S. Foreign Policy, (Washington D.C., 1981), p. 3.

54. Ambassador Charles Bohlen, former US Ambassador to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, as quoted in the Lyndon Johnson Library, Oral History Interview, p. 7.

55. Caleb Baker, Thomas Donnelly, and Margaret Roth, Operation Just Cause, The Storming of Panama, (Toronto, 1991), p. 8.

56. Ibid., pp. 4-5.

57. Ibid., pp. 1-14.

58. Ibid., p. 10.

59. Ibid., p. 17.

60. Ibid., pp. 38-39.

61. Elaine Sciolino, "General Sees Lack Of Panama Policy", New York Times, 24 Feb 1989, p. A3.

62. Interview with Dr. John T. Fishel, 12 April, 1994. Author's notes.

63. Andrew Rosenthal, Stephen Engelberg, and Michael R. Gordon, "Panama Crisis: Disarray Hindered White House", New York Times, 8 October 1989, p. A1.

64. Baker, et. al., Operation Just Cause, p. 101.

65. Ibid,. p. 389.

66. Fishel, The Fog of Peace, p. 10.

67. Ibid., p. 33.

68. Woodward, The Commanders, p. 169.

69. Ibid., p. 169.

70. Baker, et al., Operation Just Cause, p. 375.

71. Fishel, The Fog of Peace, p. 29.

72. Ibid., p. vii.

73. Shultz, In the Aftermath of War, p. 19.

74. Ibid., p. 16.

75. Ibid., p. 17.

76. Fishel, The Fog of Peace, p. 29.

77. Baker, et al., Operation Just Cause, p. 355.

78. Shultz, In the Aftermath of War, pp. 18 and 21.

79. Shultz, In the Aftermath of War, p. 17.

80. Ibid., p. 27.

81. Interview with Dr. John T. Fishel on 12 April, 1994. Author's notes. See also, Shultz, In the Aftermath of War, pp. 62-64.

82. Shultz, In the Aftermath of War, p. 63.

83. Fishel, The Fog of Peace, p. 59.

84. Ibid., p. 33.

85. Ibid., p. 33.

86. Shultz, In the Aftermath of War, p. 63.

87. Ibid., p. 33.

88. LTC Dennis Barlow, who was present at the January 1990 IAWG coordination meetings involving 18 US Government agencies, in an interview with Richard H. Schultz, Jr. on 18 June 1992, as quoted in The Aftermath of War, p. 39.

89. Shultz, In the Aftermath of War, p. 40.

90. Interview with Dr. John T. Fishel, 12 April, 1994. Author's notes.

91. Shultz, In the Aftermath of War, p. 41.

92. Interview with Dr. John T. Fishel, 6 January, 1994. Author's notes.

93. Shultz, In the Aftermath of War, p. 62.

94. Ibid., p. 62. Dr. Shultz observed this interaction firsthand in April 1990, during meetings betwee the MSG and the senior Panamanian officials, including President Endara.

95. Interview with COL Jack Pryor and Dr. Shultz, 20-21 January 1992. COL Pryor was the MSG Chief of Staff in Panama. Shultz, In the Aftermath of War, p. 62.

96. Ibid., p. 64.

97. Ibid., pp. 41-42.

98. Baker, et al., Operation Just Cause, p. 291.

99. Shultz, In the Aftermath of War, p. 63.

100. Fishel, The Fog of Peace, p. 27.

101. Ibid., p. 67.

102. Ibid., p. 67.

103. Shultz, In the Aftermath of War, p. 63.

104. Larry Rohter, "Panama's New Leader Fasts to Dramatize Need for Aid.", New York Times, 12 March 1990, p. A1.

105. Fishel, The Fog of Peace, p. 60.

106. Shultz, In the Aftermath of War, p. 63.

107. Ibid., p. 63.

108. Gordon R. Sullivan, MG, USA, "Introduction", Low-Intensity Conflict: Support for Democratic Resistance Movements, (Washington, 1988), p. xi.

109. Greentree, The United States and the Politics of Conflict in the Developing World, p. 38, and,
Randy Beers, in "Postscript", Low-Intensity Conflict: Support for Democratic Resistance Movements, p. 31.

110. Beers, "Postscript", Low-Intensity Conflict: Support for Democratic Resistance Movements, p. 31-32.

111. Greentree, The United States and the Politics of Conflict in the Developing World, p. 38.

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113. Fishel, The Fog of Peace, p. vii.

114. Ibid., p. 69.

115. Irving W. Irons III, MAJ, USAF, Civil-Military Command and Control in Foreign Internal Defense, p. 18.

116. Larry M. Forster, LTC USA, Peace Operations: Forging Instruments and Keeping the Edge, p. 17.

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118. Fishel, The Fog of Peace, p. 17.

119. Steven Metz, A Theater Approach to Low Intensity Conflict, (Langley Air Force Base, 1989), p. 3.

120. Franko-Jones, "Conflict and Cooperation in US-Latin American Security Relations", From Globalism to Regionalism, p. 88.

121. Frank C. Carlucci, "Security Assistance and Low Intensity Conflict", Key LIC Speeches,1984-1989, p. 59.

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